

1288

THE
GENTLEMAN'S TUTOR
FOR THE
Small Sword:
OR, THE
Compleat ENGLISH
Fencing M A S T E R.

C O N T A I N I N G

The truest and plainest RULES for learning that noble
ART; shewing how Necessary it is for all GENTLEMEN
to understand the Same.

In 13 various Lessons between

M A S T E R and S C H O L A R.

Adorn'd with several curious POSTURES.

L O N D O N:

Printed for J. and T. W. and Sold by J. JACKSON,
at St. James's; A. DODD, without Temple-Bar; and
E. NUTT, under the Royal-Exchange.



THE
PREFACE.

I Could very willingly have sav'd my self the Trouble of a Preface, had I not lain under a Necessity of Apologizing for the Brevity of this Undertaking, which I desire the Reader to accept as follows.

In the first place therefore, I do assure you the Peruser of this small Treatise, that there is scarce anything needful to the Knowledge of the Small-Sword which is not here laid down, and that in so plain and clear

The Preface.

clear a Method, as will give both Satisfaction and Delight to all Lovers of this Art. An Art so necessary to be known, and so proper a Qualification for the constituting a Man a Gentleman, that I had almost said, he can be none that is not skill'd therein.

A second Reason I might alledge for the Conciseness of this Work, is, that I have made use but of few Lessons, as judging that way most practicable, many Lessons being rather cloying than Instructive; besides that we too often experience, that Gentlemen are apt to forget one while they are learning another, by which means they scarce ever become perfect in any.

And

The Preface.

And now, were it any ways Use-
ful to my Design, I might run a
large Encomium in praise of Sword-
playing, and show you particularly
how England of late Years has
exceeded all other Countries herein,
even France it self, which has long
boasted its Preference in this re-
spect; but this being the Work ra-
ther of a Panegyrist than a Sword's-
Man, I shall wave that point, and
conclude with telling you, that if
this Edition finds Acceptance in the
World, I intend to enlarge on this
and other parts of it, and oblige all
Lovers hereof with a compleat System
in a Second Edition.

H. B.



T H E
E N G L I S H
Fencing-Master :
O R,
The Compleat Tuterour
O F T H E
S M A L L S W O R D.

Scholar. *I R,* Having heard so great a Character, that you are a compleat Master, I am come to wait on you, to learn that Noble Art of *Small-Sword.*

Master. I shall take a great deal of Care and Pains to improve you in that Art.

B The

2 The English Fencing-Master.

The *First* thing that I must shew you is, to put your Body in a good Posture, your Right-Foot one Yard from your Left, your Right-Heel to your left Instep, your Left-Hand to your Left-Ear, sinking a little with both your Knees, but you must bend a little more with your Left than your Right.

Secondly, To hold a good Guard to defend your Body, your Right-Hand must be straight out with a little bend in your Arm, the Point against your Adversary's Right-Breast, with your Four Fingers bent under one part of the Handle, and your Thumb over the upper part, with the Pummel close to your Wrist, as you shall see in the Posture, &c.

The



*My Second Lesson,
Is Advancing and Retiring.*

Advancing, is to Advance with your Right Foot about seven Inches, and sliding your Left Foot after it, taking the same Ground with your Left as you do with the Right: Retiring, is to give Ground with your Left, and sliding your Right Foot after it.

Scholar. What is the meaning of Advancing and Retiring?

Mast. Advancing is, when you have a Mind to take Ground of your Adversary, when (sometime) you are out of distance of a Thrust: Retiring is, when you have a Mind to give Ground to your Adversary when he approaches on you.

My

My Third Lesson,

Is. *Carte* and *Tierce*.

Carte and *Tierce* is the two chiefest Thrusts in Fencing, and all other Thrusts are but the same: the former must be given with your Nails upwards, and the latter with your Nails downwards: when *Carte* is given, you must stand fast with your Left Foot, and step forward with your Right almost as far as you can, without straining your self, which is called in Fencing a *Longe*; your Left Ankle to the Ground, your Knee very straight without bending, your Right Toe straight, with your Left Hand falling from your Left Ear the same height your Right-Hand is, in a Line which Ballances your Body: This Thrust must be given the inside of the Right Arm, looking straight in your Adversary's Face, with your Wrist upon the Thrust higher than the Point, then.

6 The English Fencing-Master.

then you are upon a Guard the same time.

Tierce must be given the out-side of the Arm, with your Feet and Body in the same order as you thrust *Carte* in, looking over your Right Arm in your Adversary's Face, then your Body is in a good Posture.

Scholar. Why must *Carte* be given the inside of the Arm, and *Tierge* the outside?

Mast. The reason that those Thrusts must be given so is, that you bind your Adversary's Sword when you make them, and you are upon a good Guard the same time: If you did thrust *Carte* the out-side, and *Tierge* the in-side, you would be upon no Guard, but be in Danger of being thrusted before you got off.

Schol. May I not make a *Longe* without bringing the Ankle down?

Mast. No, it is not so proper, tho' it is thought so by a great many Masters, for this reason, he that makes the Thrust with the Sole of the Foot downwards without leaning upon the Ankle, cannot by six Inches reach so far, and a Man does not lie

The English Fencing-Master. 7

lie so firm on his *Longe*, but oftentimes when a Thrust is made with the Sole of the Foot close to the Ground, it slides from under them ; but when you make a *Longe* with the Ankle down, the Edge of the Sole of the Shooe makes a Ridge in the Ground that the Foot cannot slip.

Schol. Pray which is the Parry for *Carte* and *Tierce* ?

Mast. The Parry for *Carte* and *Tierce* is both from the Wrist : *Carte* must be parried partly by the Edge of the Foile or Sword : *Tierce* must be parried with the Flat, dropping your point down, which comes with a great weight on your Adversary's Foile : you must be sure to parry with the middle of your Foile, partly on his Weak, and your Parry must come narrowly from your Wrist, for your Arm must be still a Guard to your Body.

Schol. Is there no other way of Parrying *Tierce* than upon the Flat ?

Mast.

8 *The English Fencing-Master.*

Mast. Yes, some Masters teach to parry upon the Edge, but in my Opinion, it is not so good; for if a Thrust come to be forced, or with any Strength, the Parry is so narrow, that no Parade can be made; when on the Flat, there comes such a weight by dropping a little of the Point, and narrow from the Wrist, that the strongest Thrust that is made can't be forced, and still on as good a Guard as the other.

Schol. Is there no other Guard taught but yours?

Mast. Yes, several, some a Degree higher, some two Degrees or more: some teach upon a Preem with the Edge upwards, but none of those above a Degree higher do I approve of: I am certain no Thrust can be made on the straight Guard without disordering of it; by that means it is the best of all others; for no Thrust can be made true except the Point presents from the Pummel, and he that disorders this Guard, disorders himself, and so may be tim'd with a Thrust, for *Carte*, *Tierce*, *Segoone*, or

or *Flankanade*; nor no other Thrust can be made on this Guard, but he is in danger of being hit the same time; for the Guard parries all Thrusts that are made. The Objection that some Masters make against this Guard, that a Thrust in *Flankanade* may come in, which is the most dangerous Thrust that is taught by a Master; and allowing this Thrust to be given, there are seven to be given upon the high Guard, which is most taught in this Kingdom, which seven are these following: *Carte*, *Tierce*, *Sagoone*, *Carte* over the Arm, *Carte* under the Sele, cutting over the Point in *Carte*, cutting in *Tierce*; for this Thrust in *Flankanade*, if it is not taken upon one part of the Foile, he that makes it is hot at the same time, and is as easily parried as any other Thrust that is made.

C My

My Fourth Lesson,
Is Sagoone and Flankanade.

Sagoone must be given with the Nailes downwards from *Tierce* side, dropping the Point, hitting your Adversary in the Belly near to his Ribs, your Head must be quarter'd under your right Arm, rising your Wrist, and looking under it in his Face: when this Thrust is given, you must decart off, beat on his Foile, then advance on him easily again.

Flankanade is a Thrust that cannot be well given on any Guard but the Straight without much Disorder: this Thrust is given with the Nailes upwards upon the aforesaid Guard: you must engage your Adversary with the Strength of your Foile on the Feeble of his, which is about six Inches from the Point, then force your Thrust home, and you'll run the Point of his the out-side of your Arm, then beat on his Foile as you Recover. *Schol.*

The English Fencing-Master. II

Schol. Is this Thrust given no other way than this you have shew'd me?

Mast. Yes, some Masters teach it to engage on the middle of the Foile, and to bring the left Hand about to put the Point aside, which much exposes the Body; altho' that this Thrust takes, it is very easie for him that gets the Thrust to slip his Foile either under or over that Left-Hand, and hit him before he recovers; then I am sure, it cannot be called good Fencing, to hit and be hit the same time; and since it is the first thing that is taught by a Master, to put all Scholars Bodies in a good Posture of Defence, as well as they can, in my Judgment, they ought not afterwards to shew any Thrust to disorder their Bodies, or put them out of a good Posture.

Except a Scholar be well vers'd in Fencing, and a great deal of Practice; then there are a great many Postures taught by some Masters, as the *French*, *Spanish*, and *Portuguese*, with a great many pritty Figures

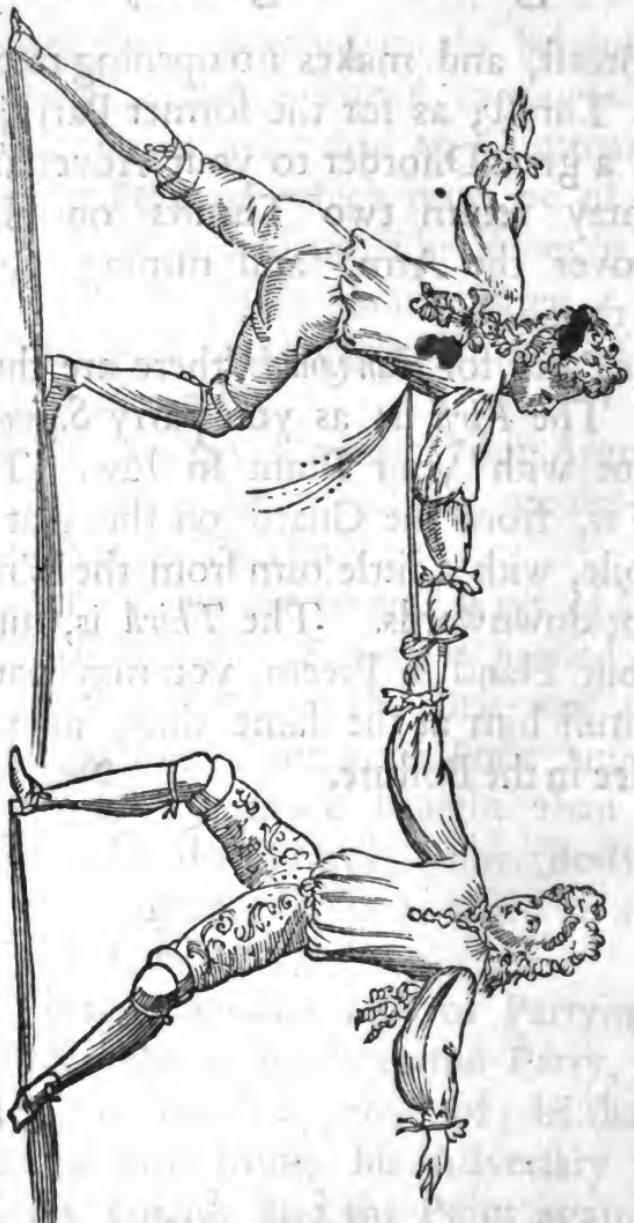
12 *The English Fencing-Master.*

that are very becoming in the School, but those are not to be shown to no Scholar,

own Breast, and makes no opening to return a Thrust; as for the former Parry, it makes a great Disorder to your Adversary, you may return two Thrusts on him, Carte over the Arm, and turning Carte under the Shell.

The Parry for *Flankanade*, there are three ways. The *First* is, as you parry *Sagoone*, but not with your Point so low. The *Second* is, from the Guard on the Flat of the Foile, with a little turn from the Wrist, but not downwards. The *Third* is, turning your Hand in Preem, you may parry and thrust him at the same time, as you shall see in the Posture.

Schol.



Schol. Sir, now you have shewed me how to Parry those Four Thrusts, pray be pleased to let me know, how I shall repeat them again?

Mast. When *Carte* is thrusted, and you parry it, then return *Carte*, or *Flankanade*. When *Tierce* is thrusted, return *Tierce* or *Sagoone*. When you parry *Sagoone*, return *Carte* over the Arm, or turn your Wrist *Carte* under the Shell. When you parry *Flankanade*, return *Carte* over the Arm: These are the Returns upon those Thrusts without Faints.

*My Fifth Lesson,
Is Single and Double Faints,*

Which must be given thus.

When you design to make a Single Faint, you must disengage from *Carte* to *Tierce* side, or from *Tierce* to *Carte*.

Sup-

16 The English Fencing-Master.

Suppose you engaged in *Carte* to make a Single *Faint* in *Tierce* to hit in *Carte*, then change the Point of your Foile in *Tierce* about two Inches, then when he answers that, he makes an opening in *Carte*, when you perceive it, thrust *Carte* at him as quick as you can, and you may have a Chance to hit him: likewise do the same in *Tierce*. You must be sure when you make your *Faints*, you observe, that as soon as he answers it, time the opening as quick as you can, and so you may make in the double *Faints*.

Schol. Must I stamp with my Foot when I make those *Faints*?

Mast. No, that takes up time; for if the Hand stays for the Foot, the Thrust is much slower, which cannot be given too quick; you must always observe to make your Thrust before your Foot is heard on the Ground; for every *Longe* that is made, the Right Foot comes with a Stamp; your Thrust must be either in the Body, or parried before the Noise is heard.

Schol.

Schol.

Schol. Is it proper to make more Faints than Two?

Mast. No more are convenient, except your Adversary retires on a good Guard, and you approach on him, then you may make Faints all the way while he gives you Ground, but be sure make them very narrow.

Schol. Must I not make Faints in *Sagoone* and *Flankanade*, as well as in *Carte* and *Tierce*?

Mast. Yes, your single and double Faints in *Sagoone* must be thus: When you make your single Faint in *Sagoone*, you must lie on *Tierge* side, then drop your Point as you design'd to give *Sagoone*, about a Foot from your Adversary's Foile, with your Nails downwards, keeping your Arm and your Wrist without yeilding with your Foile, for Fear your Faint should be tim'd with a Thrust: As soon as you perceive that your Faint is answer'd, turn your Wrist and Foile upwards, and fling *Carte* over the Arm on him, which comes

D

in

Mast. Yes; Sagoone cannot be given on the straight Guard, except you Disorder it, which may be done two wayes: *First*, If you lie on *Carte* side, you must disengage, and advance with both your Feet about half a Foot, stooping with your Body, and raise his Foile with your Arm; Foile straight, and then you'll keep him from forcing *Tierce*, or giving *Carte* over the Arm, then you may make your Thrust in *Sagoone*, or a Faint in *Sagoone*, and a *Carte* over the Arm; when you are in *Tierge* side advance a little, rising his Foile, then make your Thrust.

My Sixth Lesson,

Is the German Thrust.

This Thrust is given on no other Guard but the straight, and by some Masters 'tis called a *Flankanade*; it is given

20 The English Fencing-Master.

in some manner like it, only the former is given with the Nails downwards, and the latter with the Nails upwards: When you give this Thrust, engage him with the middle of your Foile on the Feeble of his, about Six Inches from his Point, force your Thrust with a straight Point towards your Right-Breast, with your Wrist turned downwards; as soon as this Thrust is made, if hit or parried, decart off, and beat his Foile on *Tierce* side.

Schol. Which is the *Parry* for this Thrust?

Mast. This Thrust must be parried as you parry *Sagoone*; then you may return *Carte over the Arm.*

My

My Seventh Lesson,
*Is Cutting over the Point in Carte
and Tierce.*

Both these Thrusts are given *Tierge* side, though one is mentioned to be given in *Carte*; those Thrusts are given on the high Guard: The Cutting over the Point in *Carte*, is when you are on *Carte* side, raising your Foile towards your Face and over his Point; thrust *Carte* over the Arm, which is called *Cutting over the Point in Carte*: Cutting over the Point in *Tierge*, is when he comes to bind or press you in *Carte*, then cut over his Point in *Tierge*.

Schol. How must I parry those Thrusts?

Mast. As you do *Carte* and *Tierge*,

Schol. Cannot those Two Thrusts be given on the straight Guard?

Mast. No; Cutting over the Point in *Carte* cannot be given, because there is no way.

22 *The English Fencing-Master.*

way for a Thrust to come in; but if the straight Guard comes to press on you in *Carte*, then a Thrust may be taken; for by reason of his disordering you, he disorders himself, and then you have an Opportunity to give it.

My Eighth Lesson,

*Is Pressing in Carte, and Thrust
in Carte.*

When you design to give this Thrust, then press on the Weak of his Foile; as you do thus, advance half a Foot, and make home your Thrust, and as you recover beat on his Foile in *Carte*.

Schol. I suppose, Sir, when I press on him I must not stay long on his Foile before I make my Thrust, for fear of being tim'd in *Tierce*.

Mast.

Mast. You must not stay a Thought on Binding, Pressing, or any other Disorder that you make your self in, except you design to trick him. Amongst all compleat Masters, timing of a Thrust is the finest part in Fencing, and how to time: Timing is, when a Faint is made at you in *Carte*, *Tierce*, *Sagoone*, or the Disorders of *Flankanade*, pressing or binding to hit him at the same time; for there is no way used to disorder any good Guard but at the same time he disorders himself; and if you fence with a compleat Swords-Man, you must take care to make as few Faints as you can, because he will answer none, but will thrust on every one that you make.

Schol. Is there no Advantage to be taken when another Man times?

Mast. Yes; and though (as I said before) it is the finest part in Fencing, yet you may hit the best Fencing-Master in the World, if he times a Faint, pressing or binding in *Carte*, *Tierce*, *Sagoone*, or *Flankanade*,

24 The English Fencing-Master.

kanade, if in case he will not baulk his Thrust, but give it home, designing to hit you, and no Man can hit another, except he does that. You may likewise do this to any Man that repeats the Thrust.

Schol. This must needs be a great Secret; pray, Sir, has this Thrust any Name?

Mast. Yes, this Thrust is called in French *Tente contre Tente*; that is, Time against Time. When I first knew this great Art, it was taught me two ways, which the great Duke of *Budefield* in France first invented, beyond any Master's Knowledge that was then in France, and with that Thrust he kill'd the best Swords-Man in that Kingdom, *Spain*, *Holland*, and *Italy*; but by long Practice and Study I have found out Ten ways more to give this Thrust.

Schol. Pray, Sir, be pleased to shew me any one of them?

Mast. One way is enough to distinguish all the rest. When you come to fence

fence with an expert Swords-Man, press him in *Carte* or *Tierce*, which opens him, and disorders your self, but that must be your design, to try if he will strike you: If he does it in *Tierce*, as soon as you perceive the Thrust coming give a turn with your Right-Arm and Wrist, turning as you give *Flankade*; the Point of your Foile in your Adversary's Belly, turning your Left-Shoulder more backward than when you are in your Guard, as you shall see in the Posture.

Likewise you may do this if he thrusts *Carte*, or any other Thrust that he makes in Timing, or if you thrust *Sagoone* half way at him, not designing to hit, but to parry you; if he should return *Carte* over the Arm, you may take this Thrust the same way, and by this Posture you may find out, that if any Faints of yours are tim'd, or if your Thrusts be repeated, that you may *Tente contre Tente* them.



Schol. Can I have no Advantage of this Thrust except he times me?

Mast. No; for if a Thrust comes with a single or double Faint, you must thrust to the Parrade, because you will not know whether it comes in *Carte*, *Tierce*, or any other Thrust.

Schol. How shall I know a Faint from a Thrust?

Mast. All the Knowledge that can be given to know one from the other is this: When a Faint is made, nothing moves but the Foile and the Wrist; but when a Thrust comes, you may perceive the Body come along with it, and this is the Observation that you must make; for all Thrusts that are made come from the Wrist and the Hips, but the Faints come only from the Wrist; and when you perceive one from another, you must answer no Faints but very narrow, or time them if you can.

Schol. Must I look in his Face or on his Wrist when I fence?

28 *The English Fencing-Master.*

Mast. You must look on his Face, and then you will perceive every thing that he does, which is more manly than to be always fixing upon his Wrist, which is no certain Rule, the Looks of some Men being almost as terrible to some People as if they felt the Sword in their Body.

Schol. Suppose I fence with one that Squints, what Observation must I make of his Eyes?

Mast. You must make none at all; for there is no Rule in this Case to be given; and though one Man looks another in the Face, yet he seldom or very rarely hits him there; so that a Thrust may be given in any part of the Body, without the Eye's being fix'd on that part where 'tis design'd.

My

My Ninth Lesson,
Is Fine Pass.

You must press on *Carte*, as you did in the last Lesson, make a Faint in *Carte*, and thrust *Tierce*.

Schol. Must I advance when I press, as I did in my last Lesson?

Mast. No, you must not advance; for you are longer Engaging on this Lesson than you were on the last, because you are taking more time in making your Faint to hit him in *Tierce*; and if you should approach on him, as you press, perhaps he would time you in *Tierce*.

My

My Tenth Lesson,
Is Darting the SWOR D.

This Thrust must be given when you lie on *Carte* side: If your Adversary holds a straight Guard, give a little Dart with your Arm and Foile, raising his Foile up; you must advance a little with both your Feet, stooping very well; as soon as you do this, make your Thrust home, turning your Wrist under his Shell, then disengage, and beat on his Foile as you recover.

Schol. Which is the Parry for this Thrust?

Mast. The best Parry for this Thrust is, as you parry *Sagoone*, you may do it the round Parrade.

Schol. When is it most proper to use this round Parry?

Mast. This Parry must sometimes be made use of when you fence loose; if you press on your Adversary's Foile in *Carte*,

The English Fencing-~~Master~~

Carte, and he thrusts *Tierce*, round parry him, and hit him *Flankanade* or *Carte*: Likewise if the Thrust comes in *Carte*, parry it round, and return *Tierce* or *Saggoone*; or if you come to parry *Carte* and *Tierce* against the Wall, (which is a proper Term in Fencing) if either of them be forc'd on you, the round Parry is good against it; or if you chance to draw your Sword in the Night, the best Defence you can make is to use that Parry; for it meets with all Faints and Thrusts that are made. I would advise you not to make use of it too often in your Fencing in the Day-time, but on the two Thrusts above-mentioned; for the Parry comes with such a Circle, that if you come to fence with a quick Wrist, it will be difficult to parry him, especially if you come to half Sword. If you should be forc'd to draw your Sword in a narrow Passage, never make use of it; for there is not room for that Parrade, your Point will hit against the Wall, and have no Certainty of it.

Schol.

30 The English Fencing-Master.

Schol. What is the meaning of Thrusting *Carte* and *Tierce* against the Wall?

Mast. It is to teach one the Offensive, and the other the Defensive part; to make the offensive Thrust clean at length, and to guide his Point, and to teach the Body to be in a good Posture, is a Method which all Masters ought to take with their Scholars, to quicken the Wrist, and make them lie firm on their *Longe*; and this will be the means to make a Scholar fence fine and easie.

He that makes the Defensive part, is to show him how to parry *Carte* and *Tierce* when he comes to fence, or make an Assault.

My

My Eleventh Lesson,
Is Binding or Pressing.

Schol. Sir, pray shew me how it must be done?

Mast. When you come to fence against the straight Guard, then this Lesson is most proper to be play'd: If you engage on *Carte* side or *Tierce*, bind your Adversary with the Edge of your Sword about Twelve Inches of yours on Six of his, which will oblige him to make an opening for your Thrust, but besure you do not press him very low, for fear he should take the time, except you design to *Tente contre Tente*, or conter-time him, either in *Carte* or *Tierce*. You must not stay when you press, but give your Thrust as quick as you can. Besure never to draw your Left-Foot after you when you make any Thrust, it may prove of an ill consequence;

34 The English Fencing-Master.

quence ; for if your Thrust should be parried after drawing your Left-Foot after you, it is impossible you should recover before your Adversary reposts you, if he understands any thing of Fencing ; but advance when you bind half a Foot, then your Thrust will come much quicker.

Schol. What you say stands to a great deal of Reason, and I will observe your Directions ; but, Sir, you tell me that *Tente contre Tente*, or conter-time, may be taken on this Lesson ; therefore pray inform me how I must do *Conter-time* ?

Mast. Conter-time is to parry and thrust at the same time. Suppose you press your Adversary in *Carte*, which exposes your Body in *Tierce*, if that Thrust be made at you, parry strong, and thrust at the same time.

Schol. Must I parry with the Flat or the Edge when I make use of the Conter-time ?

Mast. You must parry on the Edge when you make use of this, for it cannot be

The English Fencing-Master. 35

be done on the Flat; it is on this Thrust that I esteem the Parrade on the Edge, and for no other.

Schol. When this Lesson is plaid on me, what Defence must I make against it?

Mast. The best of your play will be to slip him, which brings you to your Guard, or you may caveat him, or keep still disingaging, and then he can never bind you.

My Twelfth Lesson, Is Disarming in Carte.

Schol. I am very well pleased with that Lesson of Disarming; for I had much rather know how to disarm a Man than to kill him; therefore pray shew me how it may be done?

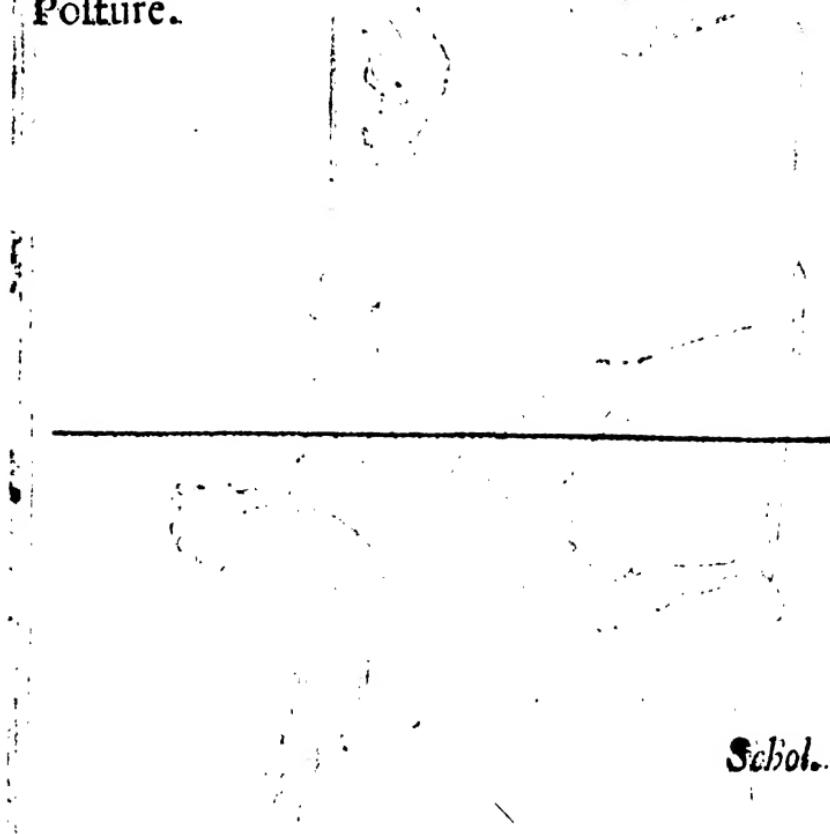
36 The English Fencing-Master.

Mast. There are several ways of Disarming on the Sword, but none so good nor so safe as the Disarming of *Carte* and *Tierce*, which I am going to shew you.

When you design to disarm in *Carte*, the best way will be first to parry him, and at the same time to advance about a Foot, bring your Left-Hand betwixt your Foile and his Hilt not above half an Inch from his Shell, or close to it will be as well; as soon as you do this raise your Foile half a Foot from his, give a smart Beat on the Weak of his Foile with a good Pull with your Left-Hand altogether, which will bring it out of his Hand he never so strong, unless he shou'd alter his Finger, and grasp his Sword as he would a Stick, and then it cannot be done; but he had much better let it go.

If you should meet with any that hold their Sword so, or that struggle with you, all that you have to do is, to turn your Point towards him, and hit him *Flankade*, but as soon as you bring the Sword out

of his Hand bring your self in Guard again, with your Left-Hand extended, darting the Sword, that so you may be ready, if in case he should seize yours, to stick him with his, which you have in your Left-Hand, as you shall see in the Posture.



Schol.



Schol. Cannot I disarm a Man without parrying his Thrust first?

Master. Yes, you may, but it is dangerous to undertake those ways unless you play with those who do not understand any thing of the Art.

Schol. Sir, pray be pleased to shew me these ways, and those which you recommend to me as the best I will be sure to practise?

Mast. If you play with those that are ignorant, and engage in *Carte* or *Tierce*, advance with your Right-Foot close up, especially if his Point be higher than his Hilt, running your Sword close up to his, raising his Sword at the same time, then come up with your Left-Foot and seize him, whether it be in *Carte* or *Tierce*: You must be sure when you come to disarm a Man any way, that you seize his Sword, and not his Arm or Wrist, otherwise it will be very easie for him to change his Sword from his Right to his Left-Hand, and so stick you; but I would advise you not to under-

undertake this way of Disarming to a Man that understands Fencing; for if he perceives your Design he will disengage, and so hit you, except you are both together in a close Room, where neither of you have room to stand on your Guards, then this Inclosure is proper, either against a Swords-Man, or one who is Ignorant: But I would advise you to make use of the Disarms with the Parrade before any of the other.

Schol. Sir, The Grounds you have here given are so plain and intelligible, that I shall always choose the Disarm with the Parrade before any other, except it be when I play with such Men as you have described.

My

My Thirteenth Lesson,
Is Disarming in Tierce.

When you disarm in *Tierge*, parry him first, advance likewise, come up with your Left Foot, seize him with your Left Hand about half a Foot from his Hilt, with your Thumb on the Flat of his, then there will be no Danger of drawing it through your Hand; step a little from him with your Right Foot and Sword-Hand, turning your Point towards him, which must be out of his reach, then there will be no Danger of his seizing you, as you shall see in the Posture; not bringing your Point to your Adversary's Face, as many teach; for then it lies in his Power to take hold of it; and if he proves stronger than you, he will take the Advantage of tripping or sticking you.



The English Fencing-Master. 43

Schol. When I Fence, how shall I know when I am in Distance of a Thrust?

Mast. When you thrust with one taller than your self, and has longer Arms, and stands wider than you do, when you design to make a Thrust to hit him, the best way will be to come to Half Sword, then you are within distance; when you are for making the defensive part, engage but five Inches, and keep him at that distance, then you'll be better able to parry him: but if you Fence with one about your own height, engage him a Foot off your Foile on the same of his.

Schol. Which is the properest Thrust to be used for a little Man against a tall Man, or a tall Man against a low Man?

Mast. The best Thrusts that a little Man can make at a tall Man are, *Sagoone*, *Carte* under the *Shell*, and darting the Sword, which is my *Tenth Lesson*; and all the rest of the low Thrusts for *Tierce* and *Carte*, and all the rest of the high Thrusts, are out of the Line of his thrusting; and all

44 The English Fencing-Master.

the Thrusts that are improper for a low Man, are proper for a tall.

Schol. If I Fence with one that never learned, I suppose any Thrust may be given, either high or low, to hit him.

Mast. Yes, any Thrust that is made will hit one that has no Knowledge in the Art: but it is as dangerous to Fence with so ignorant a Man, as with one that understands it, except you take this Rule. When you Fence with one that has no Judgment, and Fences without Rule or Method, but in Passion, you must take Care when you thrust at him, that he does not hit you at the same time, which is *contre Tente*; for he that does not understand Fencing may hit one that Fences very well, if he does not take this particular Measure. When you Fence with such a Man, you must believe that he does not know what Parry is, and perhaps if you thrust twenty Thrusts at him, he will not endeavour to defend himself, but thrust the same time, and so hit you.

Schol.

Schol. Which is the way to deal with such a Man?

Mast. When you come to Fence with a Man that knows nothing of the matter, and runs upon you with a great deal of Passion, rather give Ground for a little way, and defend his Thrusts, and repeat them every time, then you'll never miss hitting of him; but if he is not Chollerick, but stands on as good a Posture as his Ignorance guides him, then you may hit him, and bind him in *Carte* and *Tierce*, which are the properest Thrusts to be made at such a Man, without Danger of *Contre Tente*. It is the Opinion of many Gentlemen, that never learned to Fence, that if a Man has but Courage, he need not learn any other Art: I must confess that Courage in a Man is a good Property, but Skill with Courage is better. I will allow, if a Man be a great Coward, and has learned two or three Months, and should be forced to draw his Sword against a Courageous Man that never knew any thing of Fencing,
that

46 *The English Fencing-Master.*

that little Learning would be no great Advantage to him ; for seeing his Adversary attacquing him with all Vigor and Bravery, would put the Coward into such a Consternation, that his little Judgment would be all laid aside.

But as there are degrees of Cowards, some greater than others, so the greatest Heroe in the World, that knows nothing of Fencing, has a great deal of odds against him that will either Fence or Fight with a Man of Skill, tho' he may be a Coward.

Schol. Sir, What difference do you make of Cowards, are they not all the same ?

Mast. No ; there is a great deal of difference in Cowards, as well as in stout Men ; and it is my Opinion, that if a grand Coward were ever so compleat a Swords-Man, and came to engage with any Man that was brave, his Spirits and his Learning would fall as low as the Soles of his Feet, and he had much rather run away, than stand to shew either his Skill or Courage ; for then all his Judgment

ment is lost; and with such the Fighting between a Coward and a courageous Man is equal.

But for the hectoring Cowards, they will stand a Battle if they are sensible they have an Advantage; which is to shew you, that one Coward will fight when another dare not; the difference of one from the other I have very often seen; but I would advise no Gentleman to trust altogether to his Bravery; for every Man is not a Coward, and Judgment will encourage some Cowards to fight, as well as the bravest Men living; besides, Knowledge cannot be a Burthen to any Man that is brave.

I will appeal to any rational Man, that if two Men of equal Courage should come into a Field to fight, and one understands Fencing very well, and the other does not, whether he that does understand the Art has not the far greater Advantage.

Schol. There is a great deal of Reason for any Man to believe, that he who has

no

48 *The English Fencing-Master.*

no Judgment in Fencing, and engages with a Man of as much Courage as himself, and is an Artist, has Fifty to one on his side. I shall be always of that Opinion, and it is not to be supposed that any Man of Sence can argue the contrary.

Mast. No Man of Reason will; yet I must confess, that if the Artist comes drunk into the Field, and his Adversary sober, their Judgments are equal; for then he cannot perform any thing of his Art, all his Senses are drowned, and his Presence of Mind is lost; and it often happens, that he who is Ignorant gets the better of the Swords-Man when he takes him at such a Disadvantage, and so he believes he could have done if he had been sober.

I shall now proceed to let you know how necessary it is for all Gentlemen to learn the Noble Art of SMALL-SWORD.

First, That it is one of the greatest Qualifications that a Gentleman can have.

Secondly, All Gentlemen that wear a Sword ought to understand how to make use

use of it according to Art, that they may be able to defend themselves when they are forced to draw.

Thirdly, That no Exercise or Recreation is more wholesome; for it works all the Parts of a Man's Body, strengthens all the Limbs, and opens the Chest; and if taught by a good Master, it gives a very good Air to the Body.

I would advise all Gentlemen that learn, or design to learn, to argue the Case with their Masters, that so they may have a Reason for every thing that is shown them, which will be a great Advantage to all Gentlemen that are curious; for they may be as well taught in this Kingdom, as in any part of the World, tho' the French have the Name.

I am certain we have as good Masters in *England*, of *English*, *Scotch*, *French*, *Irish*, and *Germans*, as any in Christendom; but I cannot say we have so many; yet I question not but that if this Art were as much encouraged in *England*, as it is in

France,

H

50 *The English Fencing-Master.*

France, we should soon see as good an Academy in *London*, as any in *Paris*, with a Resort of Gentlemen of all Nations ; but that which lessens this Art in *England* by our own Gentry, as well as Foreigners, is, that a great many pretend to teach this Art who know nothing of the matter, and when those Sparks are discovered by any Gentlemen of our own Country, or by Foreigners, they conclude all other Masters to be like them, unless they are intimately acquainted with some of the best of them.

And this is the reason that makes us lose that Esteem which we deserve, and so 'tis carried to the Masters in *France* ; but if it were here, as it is in *Paris*, that no Man should profess Teaching, except he were an approved Master, and had a Patent for Teaching, we should not have (by some Hundreds) so many Pretenders that carry the Title of Masters.

Schol. When a Man comes into the Field to fight, is there no Advantage or Disadvantage to be taken in the Ground ?

Mast.

Mast. Yes, there is; when you Challenge, or are Challenged, if you draw with the Disadvantage of the Weather, as Rain, Snow, Wind or Sun in your Face, all these are a Disadvantage to you, or if the Ground you stand on be worse, you must follow this Direction to change Ground with him: As soon as you perceive all these against you, engage him in *Carte*, disengage in *Tierce*, stepping your Right-Foot a-cross at the same time, bringing the Heel overagainst your Left-Toe; then change again in *Carte*, bringing your Left-Foot up, which brings you in a Posture, and upon your Guard; thus keep changing both Hand and Foot till you get all the Advantage of the Weather, or the Ground, then make the best on't: In taking this Ground, if your Adversary does not move Hand and Foot the same way with you, every time you change he is much exposed to your Thrust, and you may have the Fortune to hit him.

But besure, whenever you fight, that you are free from Passion; for if a Man be the best Swords-Man in the Kingdom, and fights when in Passion, he disorders himself to that degree, that he cannot make use of all his Judgment. If a Man comes to Fence with Sharps or Blunts, let him have Presence of Mind, and be always thinking how to hit him; and no Man that understands Fencing can have a greater Advantage of his Adversary, tho' he fences never so well, than when he is guilty of that foolish thing call'd Passion.

Schol. What Length must a Sword be to Fight with?

Mast. Thirty Six Inches in the Blade is long enough to fight with, and no longer is proper; for if a Sword be too long, after a Thrust is made and parried, 'tis harder to recover to a Parrade with such, than with one of a middle size.

Schol. What Sort of Sword is best to Fight with?

Mast.

Mast. You must always chuse a Sword well mounted, very stiff, with a flat Handle, both rough and long enough betwixt the Pummel and the Shell, then you will have a better Gripe, and it will not be so soon flurted out of your Hand.

The best Blades for Fencing are the Spanish Tucks, but they are too heavy for Duelling, except they are very short, which will not be proper to be used; so that I advise you to chuse a German Blade; for they are both good and light.

Schol. How must I thrust with a Left-handed Man?

Mast. It is very troublesome for a Right-handed Man to fence with one that is Left, except they are taught how; for your *Carte* is his *Tierce*, and *Tierce* their *Carte*, which alters the Property of your Wrist, and makes the Left-Hand have the Advantage, because he is always taught to fence with his Right, so his *Carte* is your *Tierce*, and his *Tierce* your *Carte*, and to all the rest of the Thrusts are given contrary.

54. *The English Fencing-Master.*

I shall omit giving you any more Lessons, for those I have shewed you are sufficient to make you a compleat Sword's-Man, if you will but practice them very neat; for no Man can Fence well without he Fences Gentle, and with a great deal of Air and Life in his Body; that is, every Thrust must come free from him with a great deal of ease, without bustling or passion, and these are the Signs of a great Command in Fencing. I could add a great many more Lessons, but I think what I have taught you here, are more than you'll make use of.

Nor had I shewed you so many, but I know that one Man fancies one Lesson more than he does another: and here I have taught the chiefeſt on the Sword, ſo you may take your Choice; for there are none of them but are very good, and if you'll practice them according to Direction, then I doubt not but you'll be a compleat Sword's-Man, and as ſoon as I know you are Master of these Lessons,

I shall very soon after make a Second Edition concerning the whole Art of the Sword.

Schol. Sir, I shall take a great deal of Pains with what you have shewed me, and will practice them till I am Master of 'em, then I hope I shall be a compleat Swords-Man, for which I return you many Thanks.

Mast. It will be for your Advantage; and my Credit that you were so; and if you make use of Blunts, I hope you will have no occasion to use any other. In a little time you shall hear further from me, and so *Farewel.*

F I N I S.